

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03874 302351Z

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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Z 302312Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 9841

S E C R E T BEIRUT 3874

NODIS

FOR DAY AND AMBASSADOR BROWN: PASS SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE ELECTIONS

REF: SECTO 11214

1. I BELIEVE THAT REQUEST FOR DELAY IN ELECTION DATE (FINALLY SUPPORTED BY 60 DEPUTIES) RESULTED FROM A GENUINE DESIRE ON PART OF DEPUTIES NOT TO BE PUSHED AND TO HAVE ADEQUATE TIME FOR CONSULTATION. RESENTMENT THAT SYRIA WAS RATHER CLUMSILY FORCING A CANDIDATE WAS FELT BY MORE THAN MERELY JUMBLATT AND HIS FOLLOWERS. ON THE OTHER HAND BOTH JUMBLATT AND OTHERS REALIZED THAT DELAY WOULD AFFORD OPPORTUNITY TO AGREE ON THIRD CANDIDATE EDDE BEING RULED OUT AS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE. (FEAR THAT EARLY MEETING COULD LEAD TO FURTHER CIVIL DISTURBANCES WAS NO DOUBT ALSO A MOTIVE IN SOME CASES.)

2. JUMBLATT WILL NO DOUBT ACTIVELY SEEK THIRD CANDIDATE IF NO OVERTURE MADE BY SYRIANS TO MOLLIFY HIM.

3. I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT BEST SOLUTION WOULD BE SARKIS WITH JUMBLATT'S COOPERATION AND THAT THIS SOLUTION IS STILL ATTAINABLE GIVEN SOME SYRIAN FLEXIBILITY. ALTERNATE SOLUTIONS WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE ACCEPTABLE DEPENDING ON THE STATURE AND COMPETENCE OF THE ONE SELECTED. A THIRD MAN HOWEVER UNFORTUNATELY TENDS TO BE ONE WHOSE MAIN ADVANTAGE IS THAT HE HAS FEW ENEMIES.

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4. I AM RELUCTANT TO COMMENT ON AMBASSADOR BROWN'S ARRIVAL. (INDED IT

IS NOT COMPLETELY CLEAR THAT I AM INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.) HOWEVER, BOTH HIS PRESENCE AND HIS ABSENCE WOULD BE SUBJECT TO SUBJECTIVE INTERPRETATION. HENCE THERE ARE GOOD GROUNDS FOR HIS COMING ON SCHEDULE (EITHER MAY 1 OR 3). WHETHER HE OR AMBASSADOR MELOY SHOULD BE PRESENT ON ELECTION DAY OR THE DAYS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING IS A QUESTION THAT AMBASSADOR BROWN HIMSELF COULD ANSWER ONCE HE ARRIVES. WARING

SECRET

NNN

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